A person with long hair

Description automatically generated with low confidence

The Confidence Switch

March 7, 2021

Well, hello friends. I hope you had an AMAZING week.

I did.

In Dallas, it’s back to the sunny 70‘s and I’m loving it.

But no one in the house is loving it more than Umbro. He’s a 75-pound German Shepherd who’s kind of a gentle giant. People look at him and think “fierce” but in his mind, he’s a Pomeranian.

Zero self-awareness about his actual size. Thinks he can plop down on your lap when he’s ready for some attention.

It’s like “oh, hello there big fella…”

Hahaha

Anyway, we have about 5 acres of walking trails in our neighborhood that weaves through trees and water features. It’s gorgeous.

There’s this beautiful canopy of trees overhead and the sunlight filters through the branches and there’s a creek bubbling next to the path. The birds are chirping, and the squirrels are chasing each other up trees and leaping from branch to branch.

It’s a beautiful escape in the middle of the day.

But what always amazes me is Umbie’s reaction when you ask him if he wants to go out.

‘Out’ is his favorite word.

When he hears it, he can go from lazy and dozing to springing to his feet, eyes bright and tail wagging.

It’s like that word flips a switch in his brain and his whole being changes.

No more lazy, napping dog. In an instant he’s ready to roll and as soon as his leash is on, he’s almost dragging me out the door.

That instant brain switch always fascinates me.

I was leading a brand at a $4 billion wireless company. I’d been there about a year and we’d given the brand a new positioning and were just preparing to launch a new advertising campaign.

There was a lot riding on it, and I was proud of the work.

To roll it out, there was going to be a big meeting of employees and the CMO wanted me to speak to the new brand.

Well, you can imagine the anxiety that brought up for me.

So, I came up with all of these great alternatives like “hey, how about if we do a video that includes clips of the ads interspersed with me and other in marketing talking about it.”

There was a lot more excuses where that came from.

But he was having none of it. He was like “no. I want you to talk.”

So, I devolved into full blown panic mode.

I wrote my speech and I practiced it all well.

Over and over and over again. All the while praying for a debilitating stomach flu, which of course never happened.

Damn the bad luck. Hahaha

So, the day of the event arrived and that morning, I was beside myself. I knew the speech but I also knew I’d never remember it.

And just when I was sinking into full blown panic, I had a thought that changed everything. And it’s what inspired my tool “The Confidence Switch.”

I thought of my team. I managed 26 people and I was really proud of them and the work we’d done.

And all I could think about was what they would think if I got up on stage and messed up.

I didn’t want them to be embarrassed. And I didn’t want to do anything that would take away from this moment for the team.

So, I decided to hang onto one simple thought and it was, “I’m going to do my best to make them proud.”

Those 10 little words changed everything.

Instantly, I went from being filled with dread and fear to being fiercely determined.

I hung onto that thought as I drove to the event venue downtown.

And I held onto it as I walked onstage.

I had a different energy than I ever had when speaking in public. And for one very good reason.

It wasn’t about me or what anyone might be thinking about me.

I wasn’t fearful of screwing up or coming up short in the eyes of others.

It was about my team.

And me being determined to deliver **for them.**

**And I did.**

I didn’t stumble over my words.

I story told as I’d intended.

I didn’t even really remember most of it. I just talked.

And it was about branding, a subject I’m passionate about, and I was proud of the word, so that passion came through.

When I was done, I remember thinking “I did my best.”

Granted, I was deeply relieved it was over, and while I knew I’d never win any awards for public speaking, I also knew I didn’t screw it up.

But what was really interesting was what happened after.

My boss came over and he was like “Hey, I know you didn’t want to do that but you were AMAZING.”

I was like “What? You’ve got to be kidding me.”

And some of the consultants we’d worked with came up and said “Wow, you’re really great onstage.”

It was unbelievable. I certainly didn’t think of it that way, but I will say that even I thought I’d done a good job.

So, how does the Confidence Shift work when you’re faced with trying something that really scares you?

It’s a method that allows you to instantly step into a more confident version of you. Now granted, you will likely not be able to sustain that confident energy. Because building true self-confidence takes some doing. You need to build new neural pathways, new ways of thinking about and believing in yourself. Of doing away with a lifetime of limiting beliefs that might be getting in your way.

But sometimes we don’t have time for that.

Sometimes we need to step into our most confident self. And that’s what the Confidence Switch is. A tool that gives you a short-term hit of courage and confidence so you can go do that new thing.

So how do you do it?

**First, get in touch with what you’re feeling as it relates to doing that new thing**. It’s likely fear, uncertainty or self-doubt. But where is it coming from? Be specific. So, in my case, it was fear of failure, fear of judgment. I dreaded thinking about hundreds of pairs of eyes trained on me. It felt like death.

**Next, identify the thought that’s driving that emotion**. For me that thought behind the fear was “I’m going to make a fool of myself.” Notice the certainty. I’d already skipped ahead and envisioned myself screwing it up. Being embarrassed. Humiliated.

**Last, choose a new thought that is rooted in a compelling reason why you need to succeed**. Ideally, one that’s about more than you. Why? Because doing so take the focus off of you. And usually, that’s where the fear is coming from. You’re afraid you won’t show up well. That you’ll embarrass yourself. That’s why my shift of focus to my team was so transformative. It had nothing to do with me. My new thought was rooted in wanting to do well FOR THEM.

You can do the same thing whether that thing you want to do is about a big job interview, doing your first Facebook Live or launching your first online course. Make it about showing up well in that interview so you can land the job for YOUR FAMILY. Or if it’s about something in your business, think of doing it well FOR THE CLIENTS YOU WILL SERVE.

Something magical happens when you take the focus off yourself. Just for an instant, that new thing you want or need to do is about more than you.

It’s about the people you’ll help by doing it.

And when you learn how to channel that energy and hang onto it for that hour or day you need to do that big scary new thing, you’ve learned a powerful new tool that will help you tackle some of your most difficult challenges.

The Confidence Switch. Using this tool is like flipping a light switch. That’s where it got its name.

You instantly go from dark and disbelieving to light and empowered.

Give it a try.

You’ll be amazed at what it can do.

Until next time, make it a great week my friends.